

A GUIDE TO FINE WINES

A PRACTICAL EDUCATION FROM PROF. ZOHAR KEREM ON UNDERSTANDING THE ELEMENTS BEHIND A GOOD GLASS OF WINE.



To the non-connoisseur, the world and language of wine can be daunting. How can wine, a liquid, be dry? What does it mean when wine is described as sophisticated and earthy with a hint of lemon? Prof. Zohar Kerem is a world-renowned researcher in food chemistry, wine quality and olive oil. He is running Israel's first academic degree program in wine, an International MSc in Viticulture & Enology run out of the Robert H. Smith Faculty of Agriculture, Food and Environment. The two-year Master's program began this spring and gives students the same knowledge and skills as leading programs in other wine-producing countries such as France, the United States and Australia, with a special emphasis on the Israeli landscape and industry.

What makes this program unique?

It's the first MSc level degree program to be approved by the National Council for Higher Education in Israel. We've tailored it to fit Israel's climate and soils, and it's open to students around the world.

What is a dry wine or semi-dry wine?

It's very simple. Dry wine has no sugar in it, and semi-dry wine still has some sugar.

What is the difference between a Merlot and Cabernet?

These are different wine grapes with different qualities and requirements in terms of soil, climate, irrigation and harvesting times. The Merlot is a wine that is softer, while the Cabernet is bolder.

What does it mean when a wine is called sophisticated?

That refers to the number of compounds in the wine. A Cabernet Sauvignon, for example, has several hundred different compounds, while a Merlot has only between 100 and 150. Each one of the compounds in the wine makes a little difference. When you combine the compounds together, some will give the wine an earthy or nutty taste; others will hint at exotic fruits, and others may invoke a chocolate or coffee flavor.

Is it important to let wine breathe after you have opened the bottle? (what does it even mean to "breathe?")

Wines must breathe! When the wine is exposed to oxygen (after you open the bottle), everything changes. If you wait 15 minutes, it will taste like a different wine—and again in another 15 minutes.

What's the best wine to serve with the different courses of a meal and foods such a meat, dairy or fish?

These are not things that one should look for an answer 'on the fly.' You first need to understand the wine and why some wines go well with this food or with that one. This comes from experience and knowledge that you need to develop—you can't answer it in a textbook or a newspaper. It's one of the things we are teaching in the new course.